
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that recent neuroscience
2 research demonstrates that a child's early years are the most
3 crucial in the child's cognitive, emotional, social, and
4 physical development. The legislature affirms that there are
5 tremendous opportunities for preventive work with children and
6 families as well as the predictable, costly consequences of not
7 doing so. The legislature further finds that quality early
8 childhood education and child care that support all aspects of
9 early development are crucial to ensuring that every child
10 starts their formal education healthy, safe, and ready to learn
11 and succeed. A child's ability to function in the classroom is
12 essential. This can be achieved by assuring that each child can
13 hear, see, and speak at a minimal level prior to starting
14 school.

15 The legislature further finds that early screening,
16 identification, and intervention for developmental delays and
17 psychosocial problems improve children's outcomes and have a
18 critical influence on school success and family functioning.



1 The ideal is for each child to have ongoing access to quality
2 primary health care and, to the greatest extent possible, a safe
3 home and community environment. However, not all children have
4 access to quality primary health care prior to the start of
5 school. It is in the state's interest to provide physiological
6 screening and assessment that will detect deficiencies and
7 provide corrections before they hinder a child's ability to
8 function in school.

9 The departments of health, education, and human services
10 currently provide families access to various community health
11 services. However, parents are often unaware of or choose not
12 to avail of these services. Meanwhile, their children do not
13 receive proper screening, evaluation, and referrals for
14 correction or treatment.

15 The purpose of this Act is to provide a means for a child
16 to be screened prior to the start of the child's formal
17 education when the child is four or five-years-old, and provide
18 for referrals for correction or treatment.

19 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
20 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
21 and to read as follows:



1 "§321- Early childhood screenings. (a) Following a
2 child's fourth birthday and before the child's sixth birthday,
3 the parents or guardians of the child shall have the child
4 screened for vision, hearing, and speech development. Screening
5 certification of the child may be provided by:

- 6 (1) The child's pediatrician; or
- 7 (2) Any primary healthcare provider.

8 If the child has does not have a pediatrician or primary
9 healthcare provider, the department may provide the screening or
10 refer the child to a primary health care provider at no cost to
11 the child or family.

12 Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, a certificate of
13 screening shall be presented to the school where the student
14 enters kindergarten or first grade, whichever is the entry grade
15 level.

16 The department shall be the lead department in the
17 development of screening guidelines, and shall administer the
18 screening and certification process in collaboration with the
19 department of education.

20 (b) As part of the screening and certification process
21 authorized by subsection (a), the department, physician, or
22 provider may:



- 1 (1) Provide information and referrals to programs and
2 services to help remediate any developmental problems
3 revealed by the screening;
- 4 (2) Inform parents and guardians of their responsibilities
5 to ensure that the child's psychological and
6 physiological development is progressing
7 satisfactorily;
- 8 (3) Provide assistance and advice to parents and guardians
9 in meeting their responsibilities under paragraph (2);
- 10 (4) Provide additional screenings or referrals as deemed
11 necessary; and
- 12 (5) Use a standardized screening instrument and referral
13 protocol jointly developed by the departments of
14 health, education, and human services, and the
15 American Academy of Pediatrics."

16 SECTION 3. (a) The departments of health, education, and
17 human services, in conjunction with the American Academy of
18 Pediatrics, shall plan and develop no later than June 30, 2007:

- 19 (1) Standardized screening tools for the psychological and
20 physiological development of four and five-year-old
21 children, including but not limited to:
22 (A) Cognitive development;



- 1 (B) Language development;
- 2 (C) Motor development; and
- 3 (D) Behavioral or social-emotional development;
- 4 and
- 5 (2) A referral protocol.

6 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much
8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007 to plan,
9 implement, and provide early childhood screenings under this
10 Act.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
12 health for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.



Report Title:
Early Childhood

Description:
Provides a means for childhood screening required for entry into school, when a child reaches the age of four and before the child reaches the age of six (HB3139 HD1).

